fishing and selling vegetables, they managed to obtain a fair diet. The father's skill as a masseur was valued especially at periods of heavy farm work, after childbirth, and by the cooks at a ceremonial feast. This brought in from 2 to 12 baht per week.

In Group A, Families 67 and 103 were at the most difficult period of life, with young, dependent children, and housing, land and equipment to be acquired. By great industry, including egg production from a flock of 60 chickens, and by severe "belt-tightening," Household 103 was lifting itself into a propertied position. The parents in Household 67 were shy. One or the other of the two older children often stayed home from school to look after the baby, so that both parents could work. Husband and wife in Household 12 were both very shy, the only ones in the survey group who were at all reluctant to participate. They seemed ashamed of limited food. The wife was frequently ill. In Household 222, the 14-year old daughter often gathered and sold vegetables at Minburi before school in the morning. She might have full charge of the younger children for days at a time. A daughter who worked as a servant in Bangkok contributed 50 baht per month to this household. In Household 215, the activities of the wife as medium were predominant. Pay included food, often cooked, and the free use of 3½ rai of land, as well as cash. Maintenance of a son in school in Bangkok cost about 1000 baht per year plus 60 tang of rice. In Household 2, the elderly wife's services as "boss-buyer and cook" at ceremonials, and as marriage go-between did not bring in cash, but gifts, clothing and much participation in feasts.

All families in the survey group were Thai Buddhists, and 6 of them offered food to priests more or less regularly. On 17 of the 24 survey days when the observer visited these households, food was offered. Two of the 5 families that did not customarily give food to priests, did so on one and two survey days, respectively. In one case food was offered to a son who had been recently ordained. Rice was always included in the food offered, and in 3 of the 20 instances observed rice only was given. The weight of cooked rice given by one family in one day ranged from 185 to 1210 grams, with an average of about 600 grams. In 16 instances, some cooked food such as fish or vegetable curry was given with the rice; in one instance fresh pineapple was given.

Cash Expenditures for Food. - Mean total, and per capita daily cash expenditures for food for survey days, are shown, by household in Table 8. (See Table 2, p. 23 for division of food expenditures for Groups A,B) Although cash expenditures for food varied considerably, the amounts in all cases were small, and approximated figures obtained by Janlekha (1955) for 106 households. Larger consumption of animal products, which were the most expensive items purchased,

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

bringing them into the world; of helping siblings because of the kind things they have done; of loving children so that they will care for them when they are old [11]—but they do condition how and when such sentiments will be expressed. It is difficult to recall any instance of a Bang Chaner being caught in a situation of which *he was aware of* a conflict between satisfying his own desires and fulfilling his obligations to kin, so it is difficult to say which sentiment would ordinarily take precedence in his own mind; but to an observer, it would seem that the former would most likely have priority. (See Hanks and Phillips 1961 for evidence in support of this point.) [12] Actually, most villagers seem eminently successful in keeping the sentiments apart, which helps to account in part for the "centripetal" forms of kinship arrangement referred to earlier. Self-interest is of course not the same as selfishness, and when circumstances and inclinations permit, Bang Chaners can become among the most generous and hospitable of people (and in no sense paradoxically). Rarely have I seen, for example, people derive so much genuine pleasure from doing favors for others. In fact, these are among the first things that one notices about them: free agents helping others—but also ignoring them—when they see fit.

[11] This phrasing here in terms of *reciprocal benefits* is in the villagers' idiom, not mine.

[12] It is not insignificant that nowhere in Thai folklore does one find a recognition of possible conflict between the motives of self-interest and family obligation or of any moral lesson to be drawn from it: that is, there are no stories of a parent sacrificing himself for his children, or of children for their parents or, for that matter, of any moral value at all in self-sacrifice. On the other hand, one does find stories of individuals in conflict over which of two self-satisfying alternatives to select. In *Khun Chang and Khun Phaen*, for example, Wan Thong, the inconstant lover, could not make up her mind between love and wealth, and eventually was slain because of her indecision, the moral being that the person who cannot make up his mind deserves nothing.

On a more realistic level, one rarely finds anyone in Bang Chan being condemned for self-interest—the mother who abandons her children or the gallivanting husband —although one very frequently does encounter sympathy for those who suffer, the sympathy being elicited by the person or the fact of suffering, not the cause. The majority of Bang Chaners generally consider the motives of the self-interested party as the person's own business. This concern with sympathy (*soŋsaan*) for those in difficulty, and simultaneous indifference to the source of their problem has deep roots in Buddhist doctrine and should not be glossed over.

To have compassion (*mettaa* and *karunaa*) is among the noblest of Buddhist virtues. It is at one time a kindly expression of concern with others and a recognition of —or coming to terms with—what is considered intrinsic to the human situation. "Life is suffering" is the first of Buddhism's Four Noble Truths. However, since such suffering is intrinsic, there is little to be gained by assigning blame for it. Equally important, villagers assume that a person who suffers may well have brought it upon himself. The other person, acting in his own natural self-interest, may have simply been an agent or catalyst. His motives are his own business because they will eventually contribute, for better or worse, to his own denouement. The dynamics of these attitudes are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan
Thailand AO1

tions are more penetrating, but in these instances he works himself into the more serious problem of interpreting overt behavior without examining the meaning that it has for those who are experiencing it. Thus, in discussing pedicab drivers' relationships with the police, he asserts that the drivers need closer police supervision because they lack strong inner controls. He argues that when they get out of control, they "go all the way," and try to get away with as much as they possibly can, particularly with regard to traffic and license regulations. Textor's *description* of the overt behavior of pedicab drivers and police is accurate, but what is not shown in his *interpretation* is that for a Thai there are, in the relations between authority figures and subordinates, several *other* considerations that take precedence over the need to observe regulations: that authority figures should be benevolent and helpful, rather than demanding; that one tries to avoid placing others, especially subordinates, in embarrassing situations; that in most interpersonal situations, Thai have an extraordinarily high tolerance for deviation from the rules, regardless of the confusion that may ensue (as the most superficial observation of Bangkok traffic would demonstrate). Textor's recommendation in fact flies in the face of these more deeply-rooted norms and expectations. Despite these various shortcomings, Textor's study is an interesting and readable commentary on some of the social psychological dimensions of culture change in Thailand.

Together with Benedict's study, the papers by Hanks and Phillips (1961) and Phillips (1959) represent the few excursions made into the analysis, as contrasted simply with the description, of Thai personality. The article by Hanks and Phillips is a discussion of a portion of the life-history and projective test responses of a young Bang Chan man, focusing on the events leading up to his marriage, his motives for getting married, and the psychological complications that this event entailed. Emerging from the informant's account was evidence pointing to two related areas of psychic tension: (1) a conflict between the informant's desire for independence, based on the expectation of becoming master of his own household and establishment, and the necessity for him to make himself dependent on others, his social superiors, as the very means by which to achieve this end; and (2) a conflict between the desire for the security provided by these individuals and the fear of expressing his hostility toward them when they, involved with their own concerns and never completely independent themselves, are unable to fulfill his untoward demands. The informant resolved these predicaments simply by continuing his demands on others but ignoring any psychological obligations he had toward them. The behavioral implications of this resolution are summarized in the article's final paragraph (655–656):

> From this vantage point, the Thai personality stands more encapsulated, alone, and isolated than the Chinese. Thai resist strong affiliation

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

114 *157 156 as do rejected lovers who fear suffering again. Without strong bonds, they develop no sense of guilt for those they injure and stand ultimately responsible only to themselves, individuals among individuals who differ mainly in the amount of influence they wield. Thus Dang [the informant] can make demands of others but feels little obligation toward them. As he left his father and uncle with scarcely a second thought, so others can leave him. Of course, as was indicated by Dang's projective test data, this form of individualism is not entirely without its psychic toll. But on the level of action and conscious decision, the moral for a Thai runs: invest not thy love in a shadow.

114 *156 155 866 The piece by this writer (Phillips, 1959) is essentially an amplification of some of the findings of the above paper and a confirmation, in the life histories of two other informants, of their typicality. The paper was confined to an examination of the development and expression of the needs for dependence and independence in the lives of these villagers. Three major points emerged from the analysis. First, the most common expression of dependence was in the area of subsistence and economics, in the individual's desire to attach himself to others who would give him sustenance in return for services rendered. Over and over again, the informants viewed their relationships with other people, particularly kin, in terms of the others' economic value to themselves. However, this mode of dependence was not so much an overriding compulsion as it was a basic postulate about human relationships: the measure of another person's love was explicitly [581] the degree to which in material terms he served the self. The second point, in contrast to the above, was that marriage was seen as the means by which a person could free himself from the obligations of economic dependence. This freedom has two aspects: freedom from the frustrations caused by others; and freedom to set oneself up as master of one's own household, thus reaping the psychological satisfactions—status, power, and prestige—of having others dependent on oneself. The third and perhaps most striking point concerned the fact that all these informants spent their childhoods being shuttled from one family to another. Although this experience may not have been culturally modal, it occurred with sufficient frequency to be a possibility for every Bang Chan child. It was further suggested that in [571] part such experiences taught villagers at a very early age that they had to fend for themselves, and that the experiences served as psychological prototypes for the sense of fragility of social relationships that is so characteristic of village life.

114 124 In contrast to most of the literature cited above, the last two articles are based on data which are products of interviews heavily weighted toward the psychologically expressive. Two of the informants admitted that they told us things that they had never shared with anyone, and the agitation (a

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

achievement, and dependency, or by discussing those traits which are significant in the daily round of life, irrespective of the analytic categories to which they refer. In this section we will emphasize the latter, more naturalistic approach. Its advantage is that it permits us to identify and develop certain issues which play a crucial role in the interactive world of the villagers, but which might otherwise go unnoticed should they not be represented by, or not quite fit, any of the predetermined categories. The Thai attitudes toward the body referred to earlier, for example, is an issue of extreme importance in their interpersonal relationships, but one that is actually given little explicit attention in most personality studies. This section is designed in part to deal with such problems, although inevitably there may be some overlap between the materials covered here and those discussed in later sections.

The Pleasures of Social Contact

Of all the personality traits that come to the attention of the foreign observer there is perhaps none more compelling than the affability, gentleness, and good humor of the villagers. It is difficult to think of a people more consistently ready, *once contact has been made,* to treat others amicably and convivially than the peasants of Bang Chan. (The italics are necessary simply because the villagers are equally primed to ignore others.) However, this jovial cordiality is not an easy thing to conceptualize. In the earlier paper by Hanks and Phillips (1961) we spoke of these happy characteristics as "not so much the expressions of any basic lightheartedness as they are techniques for implementing the main precept of social interaction: 'Avoid face-to-face conflict!'" Although the villagers' good humor does serve this purpose, I would now suggest that it involves several additional dimensions and motives.

First, there is a whole complex of responses represented here. The tendency to keep situations and conversations jocular, amusing, and at times gently ribald, is perhaps the most relaxed expression of this attitude. It is most obvious in the behavior of village gossip groups and in the relationships between individuals who consider themselves acquaintances but not quite close friends. The essential ingredient of this mode of affability is that interaction should be a great deal of fun but of little social consequence. Of a different order, and more common, is the villagers' ubiquitous politeness. This takes a host of forms: the genial hospitality that is expressed toward a newcomer, usually in the form of "personal" questions serving both to identify the person and to make him feel that others are interested in him ("How old are you? Any children? How much did you pay for your shirt or your land? Why don't you have any children?"); the numerous linguistic

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

1950; and Wheelis 1958.) At best, it would suggest that the Thai informant was faced with a difficult problem external to himself—perhaps finding a job or a spouse, or thinking of his future—and was appraising his ability to deal with that problem. Also, such an appraisal would have a strong constraining element: the necessity to control one's hopes and desires (perhaps for the hypothetical job or spouse) in order to avoid potential pain or disappointment; in essence, "beware of your limitations; do not forget your station." This is in turn supported by certain Buddhist concepts, such as *ʔubeegkhaa*, or stoical indifference to the vicissitudes of life, among others.

Whether there is *any* way to express handily in Thai the Western notion of "the need for self-acceptance" is doubtful. Most villagers are too thoroughly narcissistic to require such a concept in their cognitive maps. Alternatively, there are other more direct ways of saying what "knowing myself" might mean in Thai, for example, "controlling my desires," "knowing whether I have the ability to do the job," or by referring directly to Buddhist doctrine. As such, these statements would be an expression of piety or the bolstering of one's self-confidence (or steeling oneself against failure) rather than psychic introspection.

A similar interpretive problem exists with the completion "his family." Because Thai kinship relations are so strongly influenced by concepts of benevolent superiority and dependent inferiority, most expressions of the need for affiliation with the family immediately imply the related need of succorance: security, support, protection, and sympathy, either as source or beneficiary.

The point of these comments is that the responses must always be first interpreted in the villagers' terms, not ours. Once made, precisely by explanatory notes such as these, these interpretations become part of the "data" and serve as a basis for our analysis. It should be recognized, however, that anthropological mythology (and these particular examples) to the contrary, not *all* the responses are interpretively dissimilar. When a villager says, *"When he hit me, I . . .* must hit him back," he means precisely the same thing we do. The point, therefore, is to be extremely sensitive to the possibility of differential meanings, underscore and explain it when it occurs, and use the native interpretation as a prerequisite and corrective to our own. For a brief but brilliant theoretical discussion of this problem see Bohannan 1959.

The Psychological Meaning of the Responses

The fourth premise concerns the psychological "meaning" of the responses. There are several aspects of this problem which require specification.

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

like to look down upon people" and ". . . probably was not generous with them, so they avoided him." The significance of this underlying interpretation becomes even more apparent when the three responses are contrasted with other possible but unoffered completions which belong to totally different interpretive categories, for example, ". . . tried to make up with them" or ". . . asked them why?" signifying *attempts to reintegrate or understand the interpersonal rupture* and ". . . felt terribly hurt," indicating *emotional pain or disturbance.*

A Working Conception of Modal Personality

Our fifth and final premise is concerned with developing a workable conception of modal personality despite the inevitable paradoxes which attend such an endeavor.

The fundamental problem here is that in abstracting out the psychological similarities which the villagers share with one another, we become unavoidably involved in the difficulties of working with "conjugate variables"; that is, the more we concern ourselves with the commonality of a personality trait, the less we simultaneously learn about the role of that trait in the functioning of the individual members of the sample. The significance of this is not so much that we sacrifice an understanding of individuals for an understanding of the group, but that in so doing we must also sacrifice some of the depth and perceptiveness of our analysis. A successful personality study is in large measure achieved by descriptive contrast: we learn more about human beings the less they appear like other people. When subtle individual differences must be submerged for purposes of group characterization, the resulting descriptions must necessarily be less sensitive and precise.

The root of the problem lies in the fact that our basic units of analyses are individuals who, despite all the similarities they share as members of Thai culture, are obviously different from one another in specifics. Moreover, as Wallace points out in a recent article (1961*a*: 147–148), from the point of view of culture-personality theory, they *must* have certain psychological differences:

> The problem of psychic unity is sometimes obscured by our tendency to regard human societies as populations and not as groups when we make psychological statements. A population of individuals may be described without references to their interrelationships; but a group cannot be considered apart from its organizational structure. Thus physical, demographic, or personality characteristics of the members of a population can be stated, explicitly or implicitly, as a statistical distribution on one or more dimensions, and to the extent that the data

4:Phillips · E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

> permit, some measure or estimate of central tendency can be calculated which will allow the attribution of some value or range on one or more dimensions to all, or a specified sub-population, of the population itself. . . .
>
> But such predicates, universally applicable to all members of a population, are inadequate for the psychological analysis of that population as a group, as an elementary consideration reveals: most culturally organized groups not merely permit but require that their members perform different roles in interaction. . . .

114 121 157

Although Wallace does not state it in so many words, it is apparent that he is referring to differences in age, sex, and occupational roles, or to any other roles that may be deemed important, and is assuming that the individuals who perform the roles have in some respects different personality types. (Whether the latter assumption is completely valid is still another problem. For a provocative discussion of the analytic complexity of the personality-role relationship, of the non-congruence which may occur, and of consequent psychological adjustments see Levinson 1959; Nadel 1957 also touches on the issue.) In any case, it is clear that whatever psychic unity informants have as members of the same culture, they are differentiated from each other on at least two counts: (1) their individual life experiences and genetic-constitutional backgrounds which ultimately give them each a unique personality; and (2) their performance of different social roles.

These differentiae are of course virtually self-evident. But what is not self-evident—nor easy to decide—is how much emphasis should be given to them in formulating or qualifying our conception of Thai peasant modal personality. Any decision that we make is from some point of view unsatisfactory. Should we treat our informants solely as individuals, and pursue our analysis with rigor, we would get an increasingly refined picture of the uniqueness of these individuals but, at the same time, a decreasingly clear picture of their cultural or shared characteristics. The analysis would undoubtedly be more precise but, in effect, we would be studying "idioverses"—idiosyncratic versions of culture (Mead 1958)—with little basis for determining what is culturally typical or deviant. In fact, questions of the normative or variant would become logically irrelevant. On the other hand, should we group the informants into age or sex groups and contrast the responses of these groups, it might well seem that the personality differences between men and women, for example, are greater than the similarities, or even that Thai women are more like Navaho or American women than they are like Thai men. Although I suspect that culture makes for greater psychological similarity than does sex and, as Sharp has pointed out (Sharp *et al.* 1953) Bang Chan culture is, from a cross-cultural point of view, impressive for its slight differentiation of the adult

121 157

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

121 roles of the sexes, such findings are not empirically impossible. Finally,
• 157 should we de-emphasize the distinctions between individuals and role-defined sub-groups, and consider all the responses as a whole, we would as suggested earlier be in the best possible position for determining the villagers' modal personality but would proportionately lack analytic precision. There would always be some intra-sample differences—as far down as the individual level—which the critic could point to as requiring discrimination, although such discrimination would obviously have to be achieved at the cost of group identification.

Given these various alternatives, each of which has its merits and shortcomings, what should the analyst do? I have decided to conform to the principal aim of this research and focus primarily on total group responses, that is, on those abstracted psychological similarities which all or, more realistically, large numbers of our individual informants share with one
* [125] another. Operationally, this entails investigating the responses of all informants on each SCT item rather than those of each informant on all items, and explicating the major underlying psychological theme or themes of these responses.

The inclusion of both the singular "theme" and plural "themes" in the preceding sentence is not only intentional but crucial to our formulation of modal personality. Its significance will perhaps best be seen by contrasting our approach with the two prevailing points of view governing most modal personality formulations. On the one hand, the majority of the culture-personality and particularly "national character" studies of recent years have been characterized by an assumption of psychological *unimodality*; that is, an assumption that the culture being investigated has such a high degree of psychological homogeneity that it can be portrayed as having a *single* personality pattern, with perhaps a few deviant sub-types. The assumption is based partially on precedents established within the history of ethnographic method (Herskovits 1954); partially on unconscious aesthetic considerations involved in the presentation of data (Opler 1948 on Benedict); and partially on the apparent validity of the concept in some areas of psychocultural functioning in which, once established, it is tacitly extended to include all areas. Even Wallace's sophisticated study of the modal personality of the Tuscarora (1952) is based on the premise of unimodality, although his aim is to find out precisely how *unimodal* the Tuscarora actually are.

Whatever attractiveness the premise of unimodality may have, it is clearly an oversimplification of psycho-ethnographic facts. Human beings in any culture are simply too complex to be of the same psychological stamp
[114] in all respects. In his recent paper (1961*a*), Wallace points out that a research design for the study of modal personality which involves only

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

twenty binary dimensions (which is considerably less than is actually employed in most Rorschach analyses) will yield up to 1,048,576 structural types, to which Wallace adds, "the uniformity of the population on each dimension must be impressive, or the types must be very crudely defined, before any one type is likely to acquire prevalence over any substantial proportion of the group. . . ."

Having recognized the oversimplification of the unimodal approach, however, there is no inherent necessity to go the the opposite extreme and posit a complete *multimodality*. Yet this seems to be the position taken by Inkeles and Levinson (1954) and Kaplan (1954, 1957, and Kaplan, Rickers-Ovsiankina, and Joseph 1956) who, genuinely disturbed by the stereotypy and lack of sophistication of the unimodal viewpoint, argue that cultural groups are characterized by a plurality of personality patterns. Kaplan's arguments are particularly compelling in that he bolsters them with empirical cross-cultural evidence, although he himself admits (1954) that his results may be a consequence of his particular sorting and categorizing techniques. He concludes his comparative study of Navaho and Zuni TAT's with the statement that (1957): "The influence of culture on personality does not appear to create a common personality configuration in its members, but instead tends to foster a variety of personality tendencies in small groups or clusters of individuals while leaving many aspects of personality free to vary without respect to group membership."

My position, in comparison, is that the cases for complete unimodality and complete multimodality are both overstated. What both viewpoints seem to overlook is the likelihood of there being *specific areas* of psychocultural functioning in which a high degree of homogeneity exists and *other specific areas* in which a high degree of heterogeneity comes into play. This more flexible formulation not only provides a more realistic picture of modal personality than can be had from ascriptions of wholesale uniformity and diversity but directs our attention to identifying the areas of differential frequencies and attempting to account for them. For example, I suspect that those areas characterized by a high degree of homogeneity are ones likely to be surrounded by strong cultural sanctions, or are areas of psychological "focus" (psychological parallels to Herskovits' "cultural focus," [10] as it were) or, perhaps, are areas of greatest cultural conditioning; conversely, I would think that areas of high heterogeneity most likely do

[10] Although Herskovits seems to have changed his definition of "cultural focus" over time (1945 and 1948), his first definition is most relevant to our present meaning: "that area of activity or belief where the greatest awareness of form exists, the most discussion of values is heard, the widest difference in structure is to be discerned." However, unlike his formulation, which in practice assumes only one focus in one culture, our use of the term presupposes that a culture can have a number of psychological foci.

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

121 not involve important social stakes (although they may involve very impor-
157 tant personal ones, their highly charged personal nature perhaps being the very source of the heterogeneity). In these terms, I would expect Bang Chan SCT responses to be highly unimodal in the realm of authority—an area of sharp psychological focus—but relatively multimodal in the area of friendship. In any case, it would seem to me that whatever the ultimate reasons for an area being unimodal or multimodal, the identification of these areas is in itself an important task.

125 In the light of these remarks, I have tried to avoid establishing rigid
128 rules about the number of major themes which may emerge from the responses to the various SCT items. The discussion which follows, and the SCT material itself, is organized in terms of specific areas of psychological functioning, and a table accompanies each SCT item. The tables are organized thematically and are designed to exemplify characteristic responses for each theme discussed in the test, although some of the minor themes and sub-themes are excluded for the sake of simplicity. The number of responses given under each thematic heading reflects the *approximate* percentage of all responses which are included in that theme. A theme is defined as an underlying, generalized psychological orientation encompassing the raw responses of two or more informants—the supposition being that it takes at least two to make a theme shared or "cultural." [11] The determination of a theme is explicitly weighted in the unimodal direction but is constrained by the nature of the responses themselves. No explicit criteria have been established for deciding the number of themes which may emerge before declaring an item, and the area it represents, either unimodal or multimodal. In fact, in terms of our empirical operations, these terms are viewed simply as ideal types. Also, it should be remembered that some of our responses are multidimensional in nature; that is, like much communication they simultaneously reveal several meanings and are interpretable from several perspectives. In this case, each perspective can conceivably yield a different number of themes. The number of simultaneous themes that occur are determined solely by the patterning of the responses themselves. Given these considerations, the statements that are made about the unimodal or multimodal nature of an area are phrased simply in terms of general comparisons as we move from one area to another. Since we are not using any fine statistical methods, this procedure is clearly the most efficient to follow.

[11] It is recognized, of course, that it is possible for responses to be shared by two or more informants solely on the bases of fortuitous factors or on the basis of the principle of limited possibilities. All human behavior, cultural or otherwise, is ultimately limited by such simple statistical considerations.